



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage

GOVERNOR

5 January 2012

The 125th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 125th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1264, "An Act To Improve the Energy Efficiency of Public Buildings and Create Jobs."

My Administration is working hard to lower the cost of government for Maine's taxpayers. Part of that initiative is reducing the State's ongoing operating costs; energy efficiency is an important part of that goal. Nevertheless, LD 1264 would mandate higher costs and hurt accountability in State government. That is why I cannot support it.

This bill would give some so-called "routine, technical" rulemaking authority to a quasi-independent state body. The affirmative requirements in those rules would cause the state, counties, schools, towns, and others to consider a number of expensive management policies without clear definitions of short-term cost impacts. If it makes long-term financial sense for a new building project to incorporate load management into the design, then it will be included in the design. If, in a particular case, it does not make financial sense to include it, then this bill could require it be included anyway. Each case must be examined and reviewed on its own merits. One size does not fit all.

The second problem with this bill is the delegation of authority to agencies outside the oversight of elected officials. When rules are made, an elected official – a Governor, Representative, or Senator – should be directly responsible and electorally accountable for that decision. Giving away that responsibility to the Efficiency Maine Trust places an additional barrier between the people of Maine and the laws they have to live by, something I simply cannot support.

For these reasons, I return LD 1264 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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Dear Honorable Members of the 125th Legislature:


Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 205, "An Act To Provide a Sales Tax Exemption to Incorporated Nonprofit Performing Arts Organizations."

Performing arts organizations are important to the cultural fabric of Maine. However, simply because something is worthwhile and good does not mean it should enjoy tax-free status. Exemptions from the sales tax should be saved for the necessities of life – food, shelter, medicine – as well as for important initiatives meant to foster growth and create good paying jobs in Maine industries, increasing our overall tax base. Performing arts organizations, while important, do not rise to meet this threshold.

Some Legislators have begun to say that we cannot afford tax relief at this point in our State's history. While I could not disagree with that position more strongly, I look forward to their support of this veto. I do believe that more tax relief is necessary, but that relief must be in the terms of an overall plan. My future tax relief packages offered by my Administration will put money back in the pockets of our seniors and our job creators, ensuring that our tax laws are fair and consistent. We owe the Maine people no less.

For these reasons, I return LD 205 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,


Paul R. LePage
Governor



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The 125th Legislature of the State of Maine
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Dear Honorable Members of the 125th Legislature:


Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 338, "An Act To Provide an Income Tax Credit for Persons Engaged in Commercial Forestry."

I intend to come forward with a tax relief package later in this session to ensure that our commercial timber harvesters receive the same sales tax treatment on equipment as their counterparts in the agriculture industry receive. As the Legislature is aware, my Administration is working to merge the Department of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Resources and the Department of Conservation to ensure that Maine will have a strong natural resource-based economy well into the future. This bill would place farmers and forestry on different footings, which works against the policy of creating uniformity and equity in our 21st-century natural resource-based industries.

Further, this bill will likely do little to achieve its proposed objective – encouraging timber companies to hire Maine residents. The amended version allows full access to the \$1000 fuel tax credit as long as someone from Maine is employed by the company. Quite frankly, there are better ways to give our loggers tax relief and allow them to create jobs in our working forests. I look forward to working with the Legislature on finding and implementing those better ways.

For these reasons, I return LD 338 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,


Paul R. LePage
Governor



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